

March 8, 2013

Senator Gerratana, Representative Johnson, and esteemed members of the Public Health Committee:

My name is Carolyn Goodridge. I am presenting testimony in favor of two bills, SB 368, an Act Requiring the Department of Public Health to Report on Lyme Disease and Other Tick-borne Illnesses, and HB 5104, An Act Establishing a Task Force to Study Lyme Disease. As a person having suffered with Lyme disease, I know that it can be a debilitating illness. I have worked with several people who also suffer with ongoing symptoms, and chronic Lyme is not recognized by the CDC. It has been apparent to those of us who have had Lyme that the tests for Lyme are questionable. Some doctors don't even test for it before starting antibiotic treatment, and some use tests that are not reliable.

I have watched the series of hearings that Senator Blumenthal held throughout New England, and the reports of treatment were questionable. Many young adults with the disease have been concerned about having children because the bacterial component in the blood can be passed onto children as any blood-borne illness.

Lyme has other long-lasting effects. In my case, I can no longer take any statin medication (such as those anti-cholesterol medications) as it causes severe pain; I was able to take such medications prior to having Lyme. When I get run down, the severe headache returns, and the overall pain returns; the original Lyme was similar to encephalitis in symptoms.

I would strongly recommend more reporting of Lyme disease as it is probably the most under-reported disease in the state. I also would feel that a task force studying Lyme could only be beneficial.

Please support these two bills.